

L.O.I. CAMP(Y PRO) · 1

Z.G.H. - Excellent report.

V.R.G.R.
✓ R.W.B.

- first rate, - am
alarmed at
apparent low
standards!

LES VOYAGEURS DE LA VERENDRYE

CAMP DIRECTOR'S REPORT 1967

The following report is based on recommendations and ideas discussed by the staff during a variety of discussion periods extending over the whole course of the Summer. It is hoped some of these will be acted on to improve camp operations next Summer.

Staff: It is hoped that the staff will be hired before the end of January 1968. A number of us would like to return next season and contacts are out to other interested parties.

Campers: It is hoped that we will be able to improve registration next year. A number of campers have already indicated intentions of returning. By changing our promotion and spreading it over a greater area we could attract the older age group (16 - 17) for which Les Voyageurs appears to be designed.

Campers during the first period were for the most part return campers of 1966. They divided themselves into groups on the bus ride to camp. After a certain amount of watching, questioning and discussion, the staff confirmed the wisdom of the campers choice.

The second period campers were placed in groups according to parents' wishes, personal requests, desired experience and camping ability.

Both methods were unscientific but worked for these groups.

Pre-camp training tended to be unstructured. Discussions about camping procedures, camper problems, etc. for the most part took place while the staff was painting canoes or sewing tents. The first week at Kanawana should remain a patch and sew period as much as possible. There does exist a need for instruction in first aid, survival camping techniques and problems facing contemporary teenage boys. This instruction should be specifically designed for our particular problems by people familiar with our type of situation. It should be organized to fit in with our repair sessions or else pre-pre-camp.

The week at Les Voyageurs was not as satisfactory as it could have been. Next season the staff should spend one or two days on the trail to go over procedures of the trail, techniques, etc.

Camp Program: The staff found the standard of camping and care of equipment at Les Voyageurs to be generally low. There were also a number of attitudes concerning camping which the director and staff felt were in need of change. Although we want to keep Les Voyageurs as free of structured program as possible and allow the camper the maximum amount of responsibility for himself we cannot accept an "anything goes" attitude.

For this reason a number of changes in technique were introduced and directives were given by the director to the staff and campers concerning conduct on the trail.

Visits to the Dorval Lodge and Le Domaine by canoe trips were limited to short periods necessary for a pop and candy bars. Trippers camped some distance from these spots so that the temptation for 2 and 3 day visits was avoided. Repeated visits to lumber camps for "free meals" were discouraged as was the practice of camping in private cabins belonging to various hunting camps.

On base camp sites an emphasis was placed on an attempt to discourage indiscriminate cutting and maiming of trees. New kybos (parliaments) and garbage pits were dug. Canoe racks were built on two of the three sites used so that canoes were not left beached on shore. An attempt was made to clean up stumps on the various sites. Next year proper fireplaces and eating tables should be constructed as well as canoe racks on the other sites. The birch bark teepee built several years ago had deteriorated to the point of being an eyesore and so was removed. The poles were stacked for future use. The log cabin also built in the past was cleaned, logs re-chinked with moss and the roof covered with tar paper. A group using surplus fibre board panels converted it into a steam bath. Plans were laid for the construction of a hot shower and bath tub on the same location for next year.

Axes were kept under the control of the tripper in an attempt to limit injury to campers and trees. Axemanship displayed by new and old campers was at times nerve wracking.

Although campers at Les Voyageurs are generally already experienced their standards are far too low and they will require a program of training in elementary camp skills before moving off on their trips. Trips were organized for one shift portaging. Campers were retrained so that they could do single lifts and carries.

An attempt was made to introduce the use of canoe lines for river work. The staff should be trained more thoroughly in their use as they save wear and tear on equipment. It was insisted that canoes be removed from the water when not in use. The practice of ramming the shore and tossing paddles out of canoes still requires work to discourage it. Although the director is an exponent of dry foot camping our circumstances just about rule this out. Techniques of wet foot camping (getting your feet wet rather than grind a canoe on the shore while loading or unloading) were adopted and should be continued. We will have to re-examine our footwear. The shooting of rapids was restricted so that equipment was not damaged for the sake of a thrill. This did not eliminate the shooting of rapids as it is impossible to move through the country without hitting white water. Greater emphasis has to be placed on the skills required for fast water work.

Although Les Voyageurs appears to need a camper training set-up we think it should remain as unstructured as possible. Many of our problems can be solved by changing attitudes towards a pride in doing things well.

Les Voyageurs should be a place where a boy can pound his chest and bellow "Look what I've done". It is significant that one crew by the end of their session could all carry a canoe singles for at least 200 yards and all took a fair amount of pride in their accomplishment.

It had been suggested by the director that each tripper take his crew on a short two day trip before attempting any major one. This would allow techniques of camping to be established and practiced and yet allow the campers time to adjust themselves and their gear. During both periods no tripper adopted the suggestion. At the end of the Summer during evaluation sessions trippers recommended a similar idea. It should be adopted next year. A short route which covers various types of terrain and centres on Lac Landron has been partly explored for such a trip. It is felt by all staff that emphasis has to be put on fast water work as this is where most of the damage to canoes occurs.

All crews elected to go out for extended canoe trips this season. Pressure for this came from campers during the first period and from staff the second. As all staff are new, and records of past trips are scanty, an attempt was made to systematically explore the country and compile information for a master set of maps showing routes, campsites, portages, rapids, etc. It should be noted that our current maps are 1938 vintage. Routes of these trips will be outlined and evaluated in a later section.

All trips left from and returned to Landron. An entrance from the South was explored and found - in future years with portages well cut this should become a commonly used route.

During the first period weather and bugs were a problem. Two of the three trips returned to base camp after a week to re-equip and re-organize. It has to be observed that the degree to which a trip was chopped by bugs and weather was directly related to the bush skill of the tripper. It is the director's belief that a trip may be wet or bitten but be still successful unless it is unable to cope with its surroundings, no matter how skillful the leadership is in dealing with group frustrations, etc. - if he has bush skills many of the frustrations and tensions wouldn't have arisen in the first place.

Dave Taube's crew remained on the trail for their scheduled time and moved through the country with a certain esprit de corps that only a crew of successful bushwackers can maintain.

After regrouping and rebuilding the confidence of the other two trips both pulled out for the remaining period of time and had successful trips.

Flies and damp weather brought on a series of colds, coughs and infected fly bites. The first aid kit proves itself to be something of a joke and in these circumstances its inadequancies led to a number of cases of physical discomfort. The director was able to meet each trip once a week to check on health conditions. In most cases it takes less than a week for simple fly bites to become infected or a cough to develop into a severe cold. It has not been the director's experience or any of the staff to have to cope with such inadequate medical kits. By limiting itself to aspirin, bandages and hydrogen peroxide the camp may be safe from legal action but it says little for our concern for people. The suggestion that we turn our first aid problems over to the facilities at Camp Landron merely shifts the weight of legal responsibility from us to Canadian International Paper Company - a position which I doubt, in spite of their generosity and help, they want to be in. First aid kits may not have been a problem in the past - this is a problem now and will have to be solved. The director would like to discuss our situation with a doctor and a lawyer and attempt to find an answer. Trippers should also be given a first aid course by someone familiar with the type of situations we would find ourselves in. This course could be given during the week at Kamp Kanawana. It should cover such areas as what to do with axe wounds, bites, broken bones, burns, etc., as well as minor problems encountered in the bush, i.e. athletic foot, fly bites, and vitamin deficiencies.

It is recommended, if possible, to obtain the help of an Air Force instructor in bush survival techniques not because I expect anyone to have to survive in the bush for any length of time, but to help promote an interest in survival camping - living off the land - i.e. total involvement with our environment and not just as a tourist. This should cover edible plants, ways of cooking fish, frogs, turtles, etc., shelters, rescue signs and signals, how to cope with pests - again this would be done during the week at Kanawana.

Each trip returned to base camp with one or two days to spare before the end of camp. This gave each crew member an opportunity to clean and repair their kit. The second period crews were a mixed lot and for the most part inexperienced or Kanawana trained. Trips were not as arduous and for the most part entered areas not explored during first period.

The truck was used to transport one group out to a spot so that they could cover country that appeared interesting on the map. It was used to bring in another trip at the end. This arrangement worked satisfactorily as in both cases it allowed the trips to move into country they wouldn't have had time to reach if they had paddled directly from Landron.

One trip returned to the base camp four days from the end of their session and contented themselves by fishing, cooking and eating blueberries. One trip didn't swing back into camp until midnight before camp closed. This shot down any orderly closing of camp. In pre-camp training definite arrangements for contacting base camp should be established and definite plans laid down for search parties, their movements and the movements or non-movement of the lost party. This would at least allow the director to anticipate some of the actions of the trippers in certain situations. This country is wild, but there are few places where contact cannot be made with people. Our problem is communications between base camp and trips. Messages just do not arrive at base camp. Therefore, we have to work out a set of pre-planned systems of procedure. On two occasions a tripper had to leave his group in order to hike back to camp to inform the director of a necessary change in plans. This director is a product of the school of thought which maintains a tripper never leaves his crew unless absolutely necessary. In these two cases things worked out and trips were able to continue. However, for a period of 24 hours one crew was leaderless and legally wide open for action. In a second instance a tripper should have contacted camp but instead stuck with his crew and attempted to solve his problem by bringing his crew and part of their equipment back to camp. By his decision campers were under constant supervision but the total operations of the camp came to a standstill and base camp with one base camp boy in charge and nine campers had to run the closing of camp, the preparation of a closing banquet, personal cleaning and packing..

During our analysis of what went on the suggestion was made that the camp adopt a junior counsellor or senior camper position. This would be a past camper who is chosen by staff on his past performance and personality, approached by the camp during the winter, either offered the session at a reduced rate, for free, or for a small wage. His duties would be as a counsellor's assistant, relief, and as a legal cover if the tripper had to pull out to contact base camp. The idea has a number of kinks in it, one being the "Joe boy" positions, junior counsellors are often reduced by self-satisfied trippers. However, its merits are worth looking into.

Each week the director met each group to re-supply, deliver mail and discuss trip problems with its tripper. During this Summer, for a variety of reasons it took an average of two days to find and supply each group. With a full camp of five groups this would impose a heavy load on the director's time. A junior counsellor on each trip would allow the tripper freedom to withdraw from the group and possibly lengthen the time between sessions of mental therapy with the director. Two people in charge per trip would release the anxiety of the director somewhat when a trip didn't make its meeting point on time.

The director again is the product of a system that allowed a trip to move through country for 18 - 20 days without making contact with base camp. By re-organizing our food this would be entirely possible (as things now stand we can just carry a week's supply of food and at that cut rations).

One complaint of the trippers was that each week had to be planned as a separate trip. That is, the route was greatly determined by the ability of the director to drive to a meeting point and the operations of the trip were determined by the need to be at that place at a certain time. The trip becomes a round of moving from point to point. With a junior counsellor on each trip this connection to camp can be loosened, the tripper and crew are free to move and do as they like over a greater period of time. The junior counsellor also allows us to increase each group from six to nine - a group size that can maintain itself in the bush and move far easier than the six - with five groups we increase our capacity from 25 to 35 or for base camp logical purposes reducing the groups to four with seven campers (28 full camp).

Base Camp: On the opening of camp a number of jobs had to be handled - damage due to weather had to be repaired - a new dock and approaches were constructed, canoe racks, shelves in storage shed, a flag pole, and a roof was put on the log storage shed. A new kybo was dug (12 feet deep) and a dwelling constructed over it to serve as a storage shed and reading room. Work progressed on the log cabin to the extent that three walls are up. The remainder of the cabin should be finished next year. Base camp was re-organized so that only one storage tent is now necessary plus the staff tent. The fly oven kitchen is in good condition, staff tent needs one seam sewn. Next year plans call for another log storage shed, canoe racks of a more permanent nature, new garbage pit, hot shower and bath tub in island log cabin.

As mentioned before only three of the camper sites were used this year. All require work to clean up damage done to trees in the past.

The Canadian International Paper Company opened a public campsite down the bay. Les Voyageurs now lies on the path of fishermen coming and going fishing, and as a result had many visitors.

On two occasions Voyageur campsites were camped on by fishermen (not noted for their clean camping habits). It is strongly recommended that Voyageurs lease its sites and post the land so that there will be no interference with the program. The road to the Voyageur landing has been changed. A new dock is planned for it next year. The entrance from Road 16 is rough for 4000 square feet but it discourages tourists. A road map of the area should be left at Kamp Kanawana. To move from base camp to Rapid Lake is a 2 - 2½ hour trip although only 34 miles by road. For the director to spend 5 hours driving to give directions to incoming traffic is considered a waste of time, energy and gas. A couple of strategically located signs and a map showing C.I.P.'s road "30" is all that is required.

It is suggested we post signs on the roads to indicate the YMCA has activities in the area. An incident this Summer showed that very few people in the area know we exist or just where we are situated. It could be difficult for someone trying to get information from a trip to me in an emergency. I would suggest plywood signs of a good size that could be removed at the end of a season's operations.

Base Camp Boys: Rick Holyoke and Harry Fox were hired as base camp staff and worked closely with the director in keeping the camp organized. Their main duties were organizing food, breaking it down (re-packing) for trips, filling food orders, maintaining the kitchen, cooking and many other jobs not defined. Their willingness to help others sometimes left them open to "Joe boy" jobs. When base camp slackened off they spent their time on construction in camp. On supply trips one of the boys would accompany the director. Both would discuss the operation of camp with staff. Being of similar age to the campers they were often filled in on areas kept from the staff. Both Dick and Harry developed a strong rapport with the staff, helped maintain the director's sanity and enabled and reminded me to attend to many details I otherwise would have forgotten. The leadership and personal initiative displayed by these two fellows was on numerous occasions on a par with that of the trippers. Both boys have expressed the desire to come back next year. With their experience this year they should be able to do an ever better job and I would recommend re-hiring both.

Each boy was hired at \$50.00 for the Summer. As they worked a full day each day, and on numerous occasions more than a full day I don't think we lost on the deal. I would expect a similar or better salary next year for base camp duties. If Rick or Harry do not return I would suggest we make a strong attempt to get a past camper for the job.

Equipment: The equipment for the most part did its job this year. It will be necessary to replace a number of items next year and adjust our equipment to suit our situation and activities.

Canoes: Canoes for the most part leaked and were heavy. Bow seats were a real problem- at some stages half the fleet having ~~broken~~ slats. These should be replaced with steady constructed or gut lashed seats. The bad bow seats are due to poor construction and also poor technique in unloading the canoe at landings, i.e. packs were carried up the canoe and dropped on the seat before being lifted off. However, this director has never experienced before this Summer seats that break from being sat on.

Canoes are portaged singles - it is suggested the camp look into the use of yokes or canoe tumps.

New canoes should be of heavier construction, heavier canvas and at least one foot longer. Chestnut Kruger or Cronge canoe models are recommended (70 and 75 lbs.). This move has been recommended a number of times in the past and I don't understand why it hasn't been carried out before now - The slight increase in initial costs can't possibly overbalance the accumulated savings in repairs due to the heavier construction.

It is also suggested that the camp look at the practice of selling off canoes after 3 or 4 years and replacing them with new equipment. In our situation (and we only have to look at the fleet) a canoe after six years is so heavily patched as to be next to useless on trips or good only for spare parts. By spreading over four years the cost of the equipment and then reclaiming \$50.00 we should be able to maintain a fairly reliable fleet. From my experience damaged canoes only get damaged that much easier.

The purchase of aluminum canoes looked into. Although none of the staff "like" metal canoes it may be an economic factor to look into. Look into Rilco canoes.

It is recommended another method of repairing broken planks be found - the present method only encourages dry rot.

A supply of paint and varnish be kept at base camp so that canoes can be maintained.

Canoe keels be bolted on - at present the keels can't be tightened if the keel springs.

A supply of bow irons be kept at base camp plus spare seats and thwarts. If Kanawana is scrapping canoes we wouldn't mind the parts. A supply of spare planking - either new or from scrapped canoes and one or two spare gunnels. It was only because we had two spare canoes this season that we were able to run trips without delays caused by the need for canoe repairs.

Three canoes were damaged this season. In two of the three cases it was a human factor that caused the damage - one lack of skill and knowledge of procedure and the second bad judgements. Several canoes need to be stripped and possibly recanvased. Work should be done on all canoes well in advance of pre-camp so that trippers are not spending time doing major repairs and not having time for the minor details. I suggest the outfitting of a couple of sail canoes and insignia on the bow for identity - we don't like being called boy scouts in spite of their many virtues.

Packs: Pack sacks were all old this season and a number should be replaced. Most packs lacked tump lines - these should be found or purchased as it is very awkward to carry this style of pack without them. Tumps are an integral part of the Deluth pack design and I can't see attempting to carry a 90 lb. pack 2 or 3 miles without them.

It is suggested we purchase some larger pack sacks with a different strap arrangement. Damage to our packs this year was due to them being lifted by the straps. We have to re-educate the campers on how to lift and lower packs or else change styles.

Tents & Flies: All tents are fine except for minor holes. Flies are in bad shape and a number have to be sewn or replaced. It is suggested that the camp purchase four 3 man Bark Lake tents as developed by Camp Wangoma (Toronto YMCA). These would be for the use of a crew which wanted to move around the country.

As it is now a 12 x 12 tent plus fly weigh three times as much and take up a complete pack sack. It also requires an open flat space at least 20 x 20 feet. This is not always possible in our country - in fact on some stretches it is frankly impossible to pitch this tent because of space problems. Base camp does not require any new canvas as it should be eased out of use by next year.

Cook Kits: We need two new kits plus canvas bags to carry the pots in.

Maps: Maps are old, inaccurate and important sheets are missing (out of print). We are developing a master map with all known routes, campsites, rapids and portages marked on. We would like to have a complete set of topographical maps for base camp on which this information is marked.

Map cases worked for the most part. Recommend continuing to use them.

Experimented with water-proofing maps with a plastic spray - all maps should be so treated in the future.

I recommend the camp purchase a supply of La Verendrye maps to sell to campers for use on their trips.

Paddles: Campers being sent to La Verendrye should be encouraged strongly to get a paddle before arriving at the Park.

The camp paddles are all one standard size - impossible situation for someone planning to use it every day for four weeks. A paddle should fit as comfortably as a good pair of shoes, otherwise you get sore shoulders and blisters plus a wretched paddling style that is difficult to work with or change in later years.

Truck: No problem - should be re-checked and loose nuts and bolts tightened. Right front fender nut is loose. Fan belt squeeks - may need tightening. Battery needs a more permanent attachment - small wire to it needs soldering. Gas gauge needs adjusting. Right rear shock may need to be tightened to frame. Roof paint needs to be touched up.

Truck racks need to be replaced with something steadier. In two emergency situations and twice for program purposes it was necessary to move trips by truck. This meant two canoes on the roof. It can be done easily enough but the racks have to be stronger. For the most part the camp truck had a canoe on top when on supply runs. A more secure arrangement would have helped the driver's nerves.

Outboard Motor: The motor needs to be completely overhauled - many nuts and bolts are loose. A new handle is required. A new starter cord and oping in the re-wind. The water pump needs to be repaired. The impeller is slipping on the shaft. There will be a spare motor at camp next Summer so that mechanical breakdown won't be a problem.

Odds & Ends:

One of the naptha hurricane lamps needs new gaskets.

A propane gas refrigerator would be wonderful.

A buzz saw would be fantastic.

A flag would be patriotic.

Food: See the comments of 1963-64-65 Directors.

I am investigating dehydrated foods and sources of supply. I don't think we can just limit ourselves to deciding now how much less grape nuts flakes to buy. Food (as far as tripping foods are concerned) just did not make too much sense this Summer. As canoe trips appear to be our main program we have to adjust food to its requirements and this means looking at the whole situation.

Supplies - Sheets: A system was worked out for the base camp boys to use in the issuing of food. Each tripper was issued his equipment and this entered on his supply sheet. To draw food the tripper made a week-menu - broke this down into numbers of servings and this into number of cans required, etc. This was checked by the director and then the food orders were made up by the base camp boys. It allowed the tripper to establish a menu and then adjust it as required by weather, etc. A refined system has been worked out and will be put into practice next year. It will be based on a list of our supplies from which the tripper marks off number of meals and units per meal.

Trip reports were limited to conversations between the director, trippers and campers. A portable tape recorder would have been helpful here.

Campers and trippers were encouraged to keep logs of trips. These are being collected and we hope to have them published for Xmas.

Photographs were limited to three people this season. An attempt should be made to obtain good photographs for publicity purposes.

Tripping Areas:

The entire staff being new and unfamiliar with the country and with scanty records of past trips, it was planned to send trips into different areas to get an idea of the lay of the land. The first period of three crews was divided so that two crews were those wanting extensive tripping and the third light and easy short ones.

All three crews left from and return to Lac Landron by water.

Paul's crew first spent a week moving up the South channel of the Ottawa. They had planned to move up the South channel and down the North to return to Lac Landron. Bad weather, bugs, and inexperience forced them to turn back after only doing half the route.

The second trip was down the North channel of Ottawa, up Ottawa to Lac Bouchette, to Lac Bernier, Seven Mile Bay into Cabonga Reservoir to Washeka Bay and back the same route. In spite of earlier reports the country is extremely beautiful, easy going and perfect for a young and inexperienced group.

Dave Taube's crew elected to go out for as much of the four weeks as possible.

They left Lac Landron up the Ottawa to Lac Ferguson to Lac Camachigama to Lac Vimy to the Capitachouane River to Moore and Lac Capitachouane, Lac Choiseul, Lac Furger, down the Camachigama to Lac Camachigama, Lac Akos, Lac Bouchette and into southern Lac Landron. The country varied greatly but the further North the wilder and more beautiful it became. Good country for an experienced crew to explore. Dave made contact with Camp Kapitachouane on Lac Choiseul which runs trips similar to ours in that area (since 1942). The director knows the area quite well and his camp has established a number of portages. The area hasn't been cut by C.I.P. for a number of years and is worth investigating again.

Dave's second trip was similar to the first except he was trucked to the vicinity of L. Lalsbert to enable him to explore the Susie River and North of L. Choiseul. This time he returned down the Capitachouane River to Ottawa and Lac Landron. Much of the country in this area has been changed by a recent dam (not shown on present maps).

Bob's first trip had been planned as an extensive one as his campers were for the most part returns from last year. He was to have explored the lower Capitachouane, across the Chochocouane River to L. Demaine and North. Flies and weather forced him back, his crew refitted and replanned a route to L. O'Sullivan. They moved down the Ottawa to Bouchette to Cabonga South to L. Bark to explore a portage between Bark and Lac Poigan.

One doesn't appear to exist though it could be cut. They returned to the Cobanga dam and into Lac St. Amour. Low water forced them to halt here and they had to move to a spot further up the Belingue River. From there they continued up to O'Sullivan and finally into the Ottawa and Lac Landron. The first part of the trip was easy and again contrary to previous reports, beautiful and good to camp on. The last part was rough and should have been taken in the other direction i.e. downstream only for an experienced crew.

Bob's second crew took a short trip after spending time in base camp and more time after their trip. Again, it was planned to explore the Chochocouane River but troubles with non-existent rivers (shown on maps) and portages forced a shift into the Dozois, through a chain of lakes to Lac Cematoose. Here they were trucked back to camp.

Paul's second trip left Lac Landron down the Ottawa to Bouchette, Lac Barrière, Ottawa River to Lac Dozois to Grand Lac Victoria and back to Dozois. This country proved to be easy to move through and extremely beautiful, at some places on a par with the country in Algonquin Park.

Next year for average trips it would be well if we continued to explore West and leave the "gung - hoo" trips for the Northeast and Southern areas.

It has been suggested that for next year a special trip be organized which would follow a pre-planned route from Landron, West through the Park to Kinpawa to the Ottawa and down the Ottawa to Kanawana or the vicinity. This trip would be advertised as such and campers sign on for it (mainly second or third year campers). This would become a regular part of the Les Voyageurs program - with trips being planned at least two years in advance so that those boys at Les Voyageurs can plan for the following year. Its route would vary year to year. It would be self-contained and self-sufficient. It would also mean Les Voyageurs could attract the older ex-Voyageur camper and still leave program for the ex-Kanawana type.

I have suggested an idea to Bob Nesbitt (Camp Wangoma) that we look at the possibility of sending trips from La Verendrye through Algonquin to Wangoma and then being shipped by truck to Ottawa and from Ottawa to Kanawana. Bob is also trying to develop an extensive canoe tripping program. An exchange canoe trip, one coming, one going looks good on paper and may be worth further investigation.

Confidential Information Form: It is suggested that the form be designed so that part is filled in by the parent and part by the boy. Very often the information given by the parent on the son is a picture of the parent and not the boy we are working with. I would like to see a sheet in which the front contains statistical information, age, experience, religion, etc., boy's objectives in coming to camp - what his interests are, what he plans to do in life, etc.

The reverse side would be for the parents - their view of son and relationships in family peer group, (not questions such as does your boy have friends younger, older) why they are sending boy to camp - why this particular camp?

In an attempt to solve our medical problem it may be an idea to say we are using this, this and this drug or medicine in our first aid kit. Do we have the permission of the parent to use it, or a form stating our medical supplies and have the doctor, during his physical examination, determine if he is allergic. Or if our medical kit is to be what it is then I think we have to state our position in no uncertain terms and allow the parents to equip their own sons.

I think "Care" packages should not be a problem if it is stated to the parents and the campers that such packages in our situation are to be shared between the group and this is understood by all.

Camp's Public Image: I think that on some occasions there was a distorted picture in the minds of campers and parents just what the physical set-up of La Verendrye is like. I think we should describe to parents - possibly with photographs - what our facilities are, where they are and how we use them. I think our operations should be described in more detail than the usual generalized "clean mind, clean body". I think we have to try and present an image that appeals to a particular type of boy - a mixture of Huck Finn and Jack London. I would like to see our posters be made a little more bold and flashy - and distributed outside the YMCAs.

(I think we should watch what we show in a presentation of the camp to parents - the picture of shooting rapids is fine except the sternsman doesn't sit with his paddle across the gunnel in that kind of water). Les Voyageurs developed a certain esprit de corps this Summer, a feeling of superior camping ability and bush wisdom. This should be reflected in our advertising. We worked on an attitude towards the bush, an aesthetic feeling for beauty, the pleasure of a good paddle, a camp site that combines all the necessary points plus a good view. This should also be reflected in our presentation of our image. I would like a list of books for the camper put on the information sheet so that he can read up - not just on technique but also philosophy of camping.

Calvin Rutstrum - North American Canoe Country

- New Way of the Wilderness

Sigurd F. Olson - The Singing Wilderness

- Listening Point

- The Lonely Land

- Runes of the North

Red Cross Manual - Canoeing

General Ideas: I would like to see a Christmas card with a photo of camp or area sent to each camper from the camp.

I would also like to have the reports of the trips reprinted and distributed to all of last season's campers and staff.

I would like to see a camper reunion week-end or a few days during Christmas where we can get together (at Kanawana or further North) to snowshoe, ski or winter camp. This idea has already been discussed between the staff and some campers and has a favourable feeling.

The clothing list sent to the campers appears to be designed to satisfy anxious mothers. I think we have to look at this carefully. In practically every case this Summer extra clothes had to be left at base camp, because of our set-up they only got damp and musty.

In such beautiful fishing country we should do everything to encourage the bringing of tackle to camp. However, we should explain (and list equipment) that full tackle boxes, nets, etc., etc., can't be carted about on long canoe trips. Few boys had tackle this Summer and most of that was left behind at base camp instead of being taken on the trips.

I would like a questionnaire sent out to the past campers asking them for news on their experience:

asking parents (1) what they see being improved
(2) what son got out of camp and/or
(3) did it accomplish what they wanted.

I would like to see the philosophy of Les Voyageurs (what its all about) put down on paper (and not in the typical vague generalities) so that directors, trippers and even campers can know in what direction this camp is moving and why. This would also enable us to clarify attitudes about program and its implementation.

Campers should be screened so that those who are coming are able to fit the rather particular environment of Les Voyageurs (i.e. I don't think we are a language laboratory).

I would like to see a budget breakdown of expenses of this year's operations against the proposed budget.

I would like to see compiled this winter a cook book (or find one) for each tripper to take on the road. This would offer different ways of preparing meals from basic staples and help prevent meals from falling into a rut. (at least end any excuses). I think all campers should cook on the trail and this would help them to some extent.

Polyethelene bottles were very useful and we can use more. Instead of a metal lid it is suggested we change to a polyethelene one - they don't leak.

The food bags worked satisfactorily and also can be increased.

Heavy gauge plastic bags (green ones used by Department of Highways for sand) would be ideal for lining pack sacks. I believe they are made by 3-M Company.

Staff Relations: The staff developed into a unit and worked as a team for the full length of the season. The awareness of personal feelings displayed by the crew, the willingness to help each other and the concern for each other's problems was a situation I was very happy to work with. There were, of course, problems and tensions which for the most part were faced and resolved one way or another. A staff that had two days off out of a nine week operation who worked in a confined group and remote area who did hard physical labour most of that period who were never able to be free of their responsibilities or seek temporary diversions and who came through sane ad sociable certainly should be congratulated. Criticisms of their shortcomings have to be weighed very carefully against the reality of their situation and their own special set of problems. That the camp, program and staff need to improve standards is evident from the many recommendations of this report. The staff is aware of this need as many of the recommendations are theirs. The camp should be aware of the needs of the staff and be prepared to go out of its way to help satisfy them. I think the staff more than fulfilled their obligations to the camp and campers this year.

After a successful Summer the last few days at Kanawana were to say the least "cold". The mechanics of this period should be examined so that personal tensions due to re-adjustment are kept to a minimum in the future.

Camp Les Voyageurs de la Verendrye is a wonderful thing. Like anything worthwhile it requires attention to keep it in line.

Submitted by,

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